

INFORMATION SOURCES AND PURCHASE INFLUENCES FOR WOOD PRODUCTS RETAILERS: A TRADE SHOW ATTENDEE PERSPECTIVE

Judd H. Michael

Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist
Department of Forest Science
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843-2135

(Received October 1997)

ABSTRACT

Retail outlets are an important channel of distribution for wood products sold to professional builders and do-it-yourself consumers. Trade shows serve a prominent role in the wood products industry as a means for showcasing wood building products to such retail outlets. This research provides information about the use of trade shows by building material retailers that will allow wood marketers to better target marketing programs. A survey of all retailer attendees at a large building materials trade show was conducted to determine which information sources are most influential in retailers' purchase decision-making. The survey also investigated which at-show information sources are most influential for buyer-attendees. Results indicate that retailers' relationship with their wood products supplier has the greatest influence on overall purchase decisions. Price reductions on materials displayed at the show was the most influential show-related factor. Statistical analyses suggest that in-exhibit information sources are more heavily used by attendees with greater purchase influence. Additional analyses indicate that attendees with greater purchase influence tend to seek technically oriented information about products displayed.

Keywords: Homecenter, buyer behavior, promotions, sales force, relationship building.

INTRODUCTION

Nearly all wood building products bought by consumers are sold through a retail outlet. These outlets, also known as homecenters, building supply centers, or lumberyards, sell to do-it-yourself consumers who are often engaged in repair and remodeling of their residence. This residential repair and remodeling market is an important channel of distribution for the wood products industry (Meyer et al. 1992), with spending projected to surpass \$180 billion by the turn of the century (Purce 1993). Wood products retailers are also critical to the distribution of wood building materials to builders and contractors. The increasing importance of homecenters in the distribution of wood products has made these retailers essential outlets for wood products manufacturers (Mater 1992).

A limited amount of past research has been conducted to increase our understanding of wood products retailer functions and processes

(e.g., Cesa and Sinclair 1988; Cohen et al. 1992; Vlosky and Smith 1993; Mulhern and Michael 1995). However, despite the importance of retailers to the wood products industry, and the past research related to retailers, numerous areas remain to be investigated. One of the most important areas yet to be researched is the manner in which manufacturers promote and sell their wood products to these retailers. This paper attempts to increase our knowledge of this important area via an investigation of retailer behavior at a trade show where wood products are displayed and sold.

Research objectives

A primary objective of this research was to provide information that can be used by wood products manufacturers and market researchers to better target marketing programs to building material retailers. The first step in meeting this goal was to investigate which in-

formation sources have the greatest influence on retailers' purchase decisions. However, given the widespread use and importance of trade shows, the research was designed to concentrate on the at-show information sources most influential to wood products retailers' purchase decisions. Specific objectives thus include determining the importance of various types of information encountered by buyer-attendees, categorizing these results based on statistical analyses, and investigating the use of multiple information sources based on attendee characteristics. Results from this paper should therefore be useful to wood products marketers seeking to adapt their selling programs to the attributes of the prospective buyer.

A second exploratory objective was to advance our understanding of overall buyer behavior, and specifically that exhibited by trade show attendees. A large portion of this work is based on research by Bello (1992) and Moriarity and Spekman (1984). These authors examined industrial buyer behavior with a concentration on industrial trade shows. The current research expands our knowledge by examining behavior by retailer buyers at a wood products-oriented trade show.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Trade shows

Trade shows are events designed to allow multiple sellers of products to exhibit those items in a central location over a relatively short time frame. The buyer-attendees at trade shows thus have the ability to examine more efficiently the many products being exhibited at a show. Trade shows serve a multitude of purposes for both attendees and manufacturer exhibitors, and have been noted as an important part of the sales promotion component of wood manufacturers' promotional mix (Sinclair 1992). Attendees will visit a show to learn more about new wood products or even to place orders for products. Manufacturers will exhibit at a trade show to fulfill both selling and nonselling objectives (Bonoma 1983).

The nonselling objectives can include test marketing new products, gathering competitive intelligence, or simply maintaining corporate and brand images. Selling-related objectives can range from actually selling products to prospecting for new buyers.

Trade shows are an important communications tool for both industrial and consumer forest products (Michael and Smith 1996; Matter 1992). Estimates indicate that trade shows rank third, behind TV and newspaper advertising, in terms of promotional expenditures by American firms (Bello and Barksdale 1986). In the business marketing communications mix, trade shows rank second behind personal selling in terms of expenditures (O'Hara and Herbig 1993) with more than \$54 billion invested annually (Trade Show Bureau 1994).

Trade shows are widely used because of a number of benefits, such as communicating promotional messages to the right people about the right products at the right time in the buying cycle (Bellizzi and Lipps 1984). In addition, Bello (1992) found that trade shows provide marketers with unique opportunities to influence key members of buying networks who might not be as easily reached through sales calls or other promotional methods. Influential members of buying teams who normally are difficult to contact are often readily available for personal contact while attending a trade show. Moreover, research suggests that attendees are infrequently contacted by field sales forces (Haas 1992), and yet the entire sales force may attend a trade show at which most of their target market is in attendance. Parasuraman (1981) determined that trade shows were ranked third behind peer recommendations and personal selling as business marketing promotional tools for influencing the purchase decision process. Innovative forest products firms have likewise been found to prefer direct sources of product information such as those found at trade shows (West and Sinclair 1992).

The many benefits to be accrued at trade shows come at a substantial cost. Large wood

products manufacturers are known to spend more than three-quarters of a million dollars to prepare displays and rent space at major shows (Sinclair 1992). Both attendee and exhibitor firms must pay expenses for personnel who are attending a show. Large exhibitors often take more than 20 salespersons to staff a booth. Such staffing needs not only incur large at-show expenses but also take the sales staff away from their normal duties for up to a week.

Despite an increase in trade-show-related research activity in the past decade, our knowledge of trade shows is still substantially less than that for other marketing activities (Rosson and Seringhaus 1991). This is especially relevant when the high levels of spending on trade shows are considered. Given the small amount of money spent by wood manufacturers on consumer-directed advertising, one can get an idea of the importance of trade shows to these marketers.

Buyer behavior and information sources

The behavior of industrial buyers has been the subject of much work in the marketing literature (e.g., Webster and Wind 1972; Moriarity and Spekman 1984). Industrial buyers are distinct from consumers in that an industrial buyer purchases a product with an intent either to resell it or use it in the manufacture of other products. Greater knowledge of buyer behavior is valuable because it can allow marketers to specify market segments and determine which information sources are most used by buyers with given roles and positions. Marketers of wood products can benefit as much as marketers of any other product from an increased understanding of the key factors that influence purchase decisions by industrial buyers.

One of the keys to understanding buyer behavior is a knowledge of the information sources utilized by buyers. Information sources may originate from the selling firm or from various other sources. Those sources from the selling firm are generally part of that

firm's promotions mix (i.e., sales promotion, advertising, etc.). A number of studies have examined the influence of various information sources on buyers. For example, Michael and Smith (1995) examined sources used by retailer furniture buyers and determined that trade shows are second in influence after consumer demand. Other authors have examined the influence of various sources on buyers from a range of industries (Parasuraman 1981; Jackson et al. 1987) and have also noted the importance of trade shows as information sources.

A substantial challenge for trade show exhibitors is to determine which information sources are utilized by different types of attendees. Attendees with different levels of discretion over purchases of materials will seek different sources of show-related information (Bello 1992). Likewise, some attendees will be searching for information related to product features, while others may have already decided on a product category and are seeking favorable terms for a purchase. The ability to make generalizations about a trade show attendee's preference for certain information should allow a marketing manager to adapt his staff's sales tactics to better match the prospective buyer.

METHODOLOGY

Research setting

The trade show used for data collection is managed and promoted by the Lumbermen's Association of Texas (LAT). This association has as members building material retailers and dealers representing Texas and surrounding states. Its associate members are building products producers, both wood and nonwood, from the United States as well as other nations. This trade show has for many years been the largest state-level building materials show in the country, with nearly 1,000 exhibitor personnel attending the 1997 show. The sample for this survey included all 486 retailers who attended the 1997 LAT trade show. It should be noted that a small number of these

were employed at the same company, though not necessarily at the same location.

Survey design

The measures used in this questionnaire were based largely on those previously used in similar research unrelated to wood building products. The taxonomy of 12 information sources used in the survey was derived largely from Moriarity and Spekman (1984). A similar list of sources has also been used with trade show research on industrial products (Bello 1992) and furniture (Michael and Smith 1994). The majority of items used as determinants of retailer purchase decisions came from Parasuraman (1981). Finally, the list of show uses (i.e., objectives) was taken from Bello (1992) and has also been used in research related to trade shows where wood products are displayed (Michael and Smith 1996). However, pretesting with three different groups indicated a need for minor changes in the survey design in order better to reflect the specific situation and products inherent at wood building material trade shows.

The design of the survey to reflect previously used measures also allowed for statistical procedures to replicate past tests. For example, the independent variables utilized in statistical tests (e.g., MANOVA) in the current research were chosen to reflect those used previously by Bello (1992). In addition, it was hypothesized *a priori* that the factors developed in past factor analyses from similar trade show research (e.g., Bello 1992) would also appear in the current analyses.

Data collection

The methodology for the data collection utilized a variation of the traditional mail survey. An initial mailing of the survey was sent to all attendees with the edition of the association's newsletter mailed immediately after the show. A cover letter asking for cooperation was signed by the researcher as well as the executive director of the association. A business reply mailer allowed the surveys to be

returned to a university address at no cost to respondents. A second, directed mailing was sent to all 486 retailer/dealer attendees approximately three weeks later with a follow-up postcard being mailed approximately 10 days after the second wave of surveys.

These data collection efforts resulted in the return of 123 usable surveys. A small number of additional surveys returned were unusable or had been completed by someone at a non-retailer company. The overall adjusted response rate was therefore approximately 26%.

Independent *t*-tests were utilized to test for the possibility of nonresponse bias in our results. Nonresponse bias tests are conducted to investigate whether those that did not respond to a survey are significantly different from those who did. It is generally assumed that those who respond in the latter stages of data collection are more like those who did not respond (Armstrong and Overton 1977). Therefore, respondents to the initial survey were compared to those who responded to follow-up efforts on variables related to title, number of employees, and sales category. These tests indicated that the survey results slightly underrepresented smaller firms. Otherwise, no significant differences were found at the 95% confidence level.

RESULTS

Respondent profile

More than half of the survey respondents listed themselves as some type of manager. A total of 37 persons reported being presidents or owners, with another 16 having the title of vice president. An indication of the perceived stature of the respondents is illustrated by their overwhelming belief that they have a large influence over their building materials purchases. This was measured by asking respondents to rate their influence on a 7-point scale (7 being highest), with the overall average score being 6.2. This provides a strong indication that those retailer representatives attending this trade show are decision-makers who are in positions to directly impact their firms'

TABLE 1. Annual sales categories for respondents.

Sales category (1996)	No of respondents	% of total
<\$1,000,000	2	1.6
\$1,000,000–\$4,999,999	42	34.7
\$5,000,000–\$9,999,999	18	14.9
\$10,000,000–\$19,999,999	18	14.9
\$20,000,000–\$49,999,999	11	9.1
>\$50,000,000	30	24.8

building material purchases for resale to various consumers.

Respondents were also asked to provide the total number of retail locations owned by their company. The average number of locations operated by respondents' firms was 13.5. The maximum number of stores reported by respondents was well over 150. The average number of full-time equivalent employees at respondents' firms was 545. However, it must be realized that the very large companies had a disproportionate effect on this average. Therefore, the median number of employees

was also calculated and determined to be 30. It is apparent from the survey that attendees of this trade show are also visiting other shows. Respondents reported attending an average of 2.6 trade shows a year, with the maximum number of shows being 6.

Respondents were next asked to check one of six categories indicating their 1996 sales (Table 1). Less than 40% of the 121 persons responding to this question reported sales of less than \$5 million. Only 2 respondents reported sales of less than \$1 million.

Overall purchase influences

Respondents were first asked to rate the influence that 11 factors have on their building material purchases. A 7-point Likert scale was used to rate influence and ranged from "not at all" to "very large extent." Figure 1 shows that building material dealers' *relationship with supplier* was the most influential factor impacting their building material purchases. The importance of building strong relation-

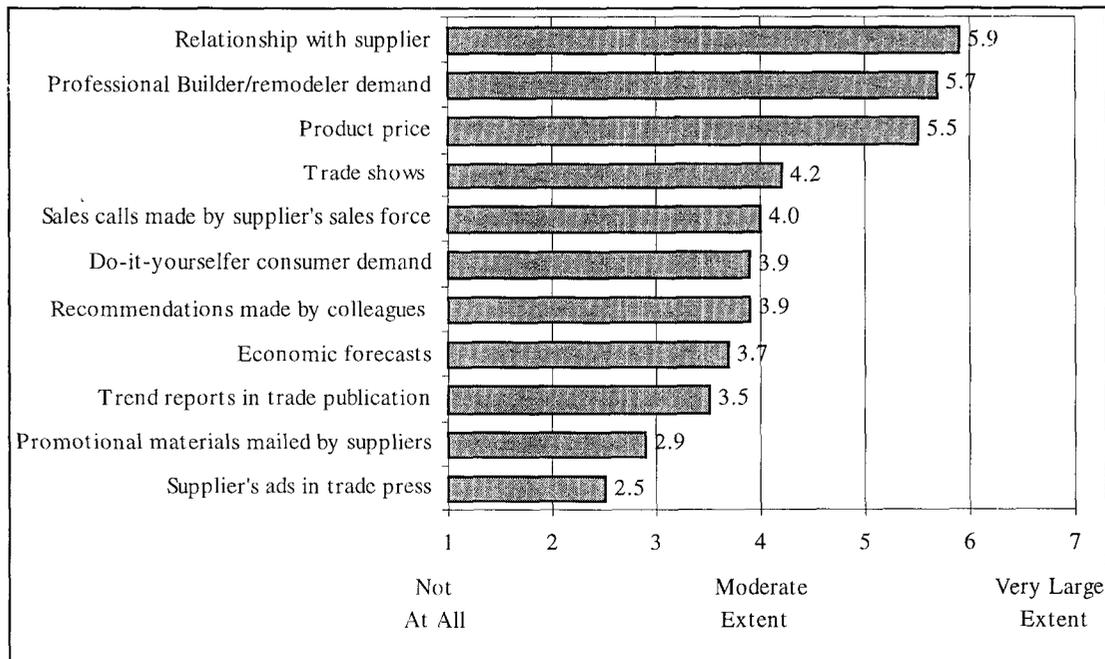


FIG. 1. Extent to which factors influence building materials purchase decisions.

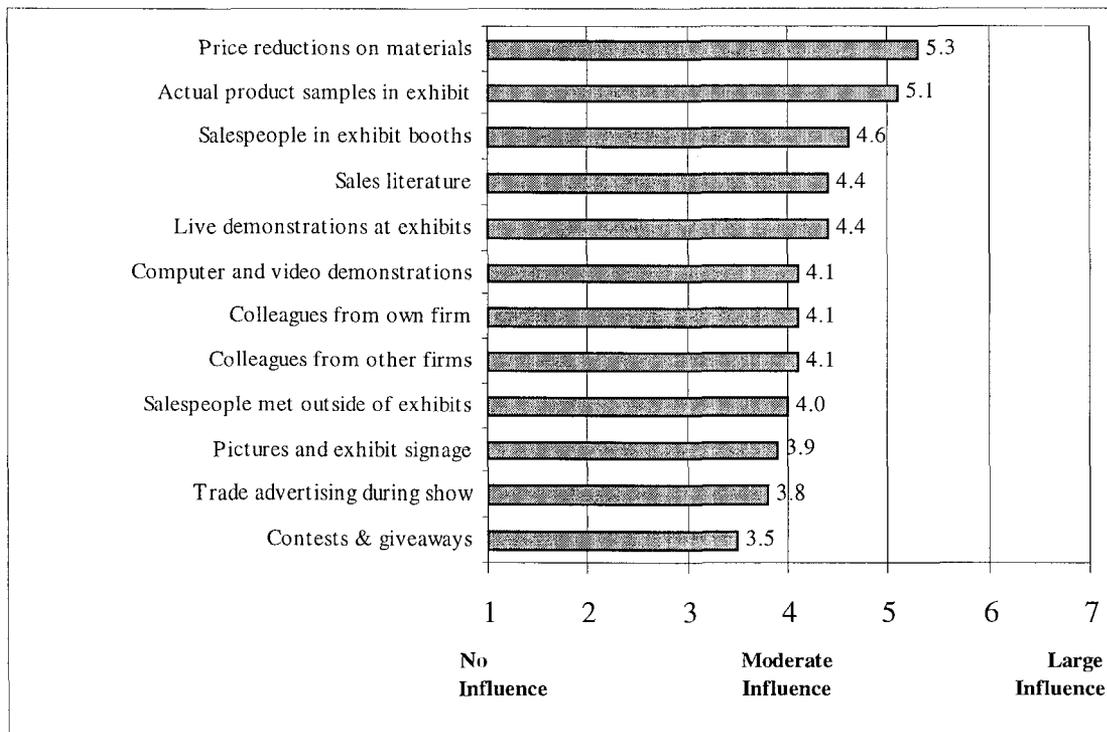


FIG. 2. Influence of show-related information sources on building materials purchase decisions.

ships between wood industry business partners has recently gained much greater attention (e.g., Sinclair 1990; Vlosky and Wilson 1997) and has long been emphasized in the business marketing literature (Ford 1980; Sheth and Sharma 1997). Trade shows have also been noted for their ability to fulfill the objectives of relationship building for wood products buyers and sellers (Michael and Smith 1996).

The second most influential factor was found to be *professional builder/remodeler demand*. This result is not surprising given the large number of respondents who sell directly to contractors. It is relevant to note that *trade shows* were more influential than other supplier-controlled factors such as sales calls and promotional materials.

Influence of in-show information sources

Respondents were next asked to rate the influence that 12 different information sources encountered during the show had on their

wood building materials (for resale) procurement decisions (Fig. 2). Ratings of the factors were done on a 7-point scale where 1 equaled "no influence" and 7 equaled a "large influence." Results from this survey indicate that in-exhibit *price reductions on materials* had the greatest influence on retailers' purchase decisions. The second most influential source was *actual product samples* seen in the exhibits.

Sources of trade show information.—A factor analysis was performed on the responses to the 12 information sources in order to reduce and summarize the data into a smaller number of underlying dimensions. Factor analysis is a multivariate technique designed to condense information from a large number of variables into a smaller number of representative factors (Hair et al. 1992).

Table 2 illustrates the results of the principal components factor analysis using a varimax rotation. The three factors with eigenvalues

TABLE 2. *Factor analysis of information sources.*

Information sources	Factor 1 In-exhibit promotions	Factor 2 Out-of-exhibit sources	Factor 3 In-exhibit deals
Sales literature	0.804	<0.001	<0.001
Live demonstrations in exhibits	0.793	0.103	0.128
Product samples in exhibits	0.752	0.106	0.155
Pictures and exhibit signage	0.703	0.393	<0.001
Computer and video demonstrations	0.699	0.184	<0.001
Colleagues from other firms	0.183	0.844	<0.001
Colleagues from own firm	0.105	0.775	<0.001
Salespeople met outside exhibits	0.311	0.724	0.276
Trade advertising during the show	<0.001	0.588	0.223
Price reductions on materials	<0.001	<0.001	0.863
Contests and giveaways	<0.001	<0.001	0.811
Eigenvalue	4.480	1.857	1.532
Cumulative variance explained (%)	27.8	48.5	65.6
Cronbach's alpha	0.847	0.774	0.685

greater than 1.0 were chosen for the final solution. These three information-related factors accounted for 65.6% of the variance and were labeled *out-of-exhibit sources*, *in-exhibit promotions*, and *in-exhibit deals*. The Cronbach's alphas in Table 2 range from 0.685 to 0.847 and indicate strong support for internal reliability.

The factor scores from this analysis were subsequently used as variables in a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) test. The MANOVA was conducted with the three information source scales as dependent variables and each respondent's influence level and firm size as independent variables. The independent variables were chosen to reflect those

used previously by Bello (1992). Table 3 contains the MANOVA as well as univariate results for additional relationships.

The MANOVA results show a significant overall main effect for both the attendees' influence ($P < 0.001$) and firm size factors ($P < 0.033$). This indicates that there is an overall relationship with these variables and the two sources of information. The univariate results indicate mixed significance for the relationships between information source, attendee influence, and firm size. In-exhibit promotions show significant relationships between both attendee's influence ($P < 0.001$) and their firm size ($P < 0.033$). This indicates that the use of these promotions as information sources to

TABLE 3. *Summary of sources of trade show information: Multivariate and univariate ANOVA.*

Source of variation	Multivariate F ratio	Univariate F ratio	Degrees of freedom	P less than
Influence ¹	4.80		15	0.001
In-exhibit promotions		12.97	5	0.001
Out-of-exhibit sources		1.25	5	0.294
In-exhibit deals		1.58	5	0.172
Firm size ²	1.81		15	0.033
In-exhibit promotions		3.28	5	0.009
Out-of-exhibit sources		0.47	5	0.800
In-exhibit deals		1.66	5	0.152
Influence × size	1.58		15	0.067

¹ Influence was measured by asking respondents to rate their influence over building material purchases on a 7-point scale.

² Firm size was measured using the number of full-time employees.

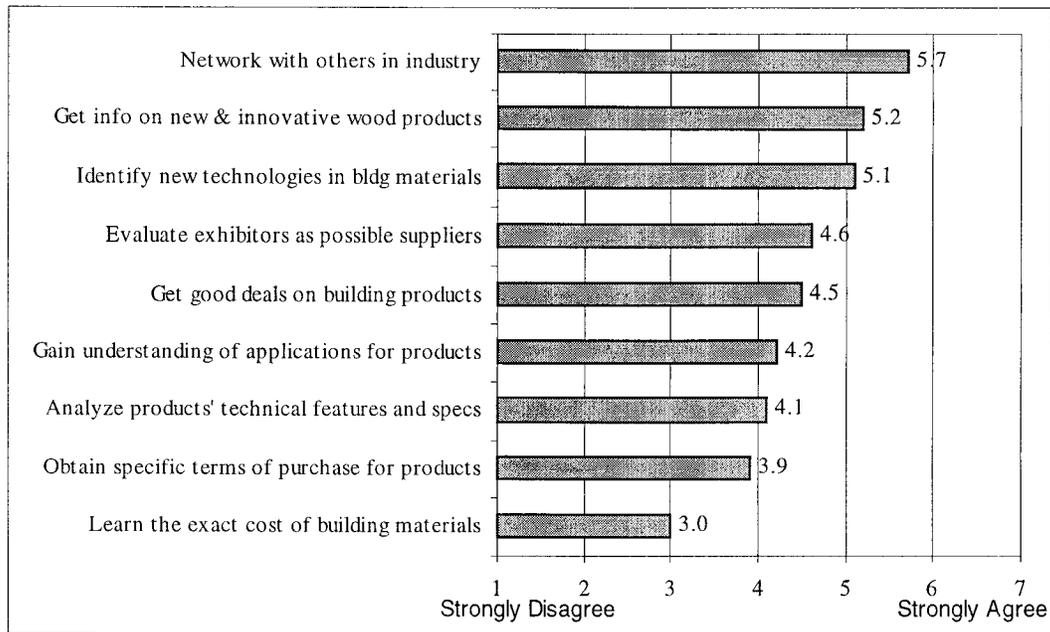


FIG. 3. Level of agreement with statements related to respondents' use of the show.

influence procurement decisions is greater for those attendees in positions of greater influence and from larger firms. However, there is no support for significant relationships between either attendee influence or firm size and the other two information sources (*out-of-exhibit sources* and *in-exhibit deals*).

The results from this analysis provide several suggestions for managers of wood products trade show exhibits. First, the *in-exhibit promotions* items from the factor analysis appear to be utilized more heavily by attendees with greater influence on their firm's building materials procurement decisions. This implies that, for instance, an exhibit manager should strive to have the best salespeople attend the show and remain in the exhibit. In addition, a manager should attempt to produce high quality in-exhibit information sources (e.g., computer demos, product samples) in order to have the greatest impact on those attendees with the greatest purchase influence. Finally, exhibit design must not be neglected; the booth should be designed to facilitate and encourage personal contact.

Specific uses of the trade show

The survey next asked respondents to rate their agreement with statements relating to their use of the show. These items were adapted from those used by Bello (1992). Higher numbers indicate stronger agreement that the stated purpose was an objective for attendees. Figure 3 illustrates that *networking with other industry personnel* received the highest rating. Information gathering activities related to new wood products and new technologies in building materials were also highly rated by respondents.

Types of trade show information.—A second factor analysis was performed on respondents' ratings for their uses of the show (Table 4). The final solution contained two factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 and explained 58.9% of the variance. It had been hypothesized *a priori* that there would be a two factor solution to reflect those found by Bello (1992) in similar research. The Cronbach's alphas for the two factors were 0.699 and 0.766 and again indicate strong support for internal

TABLE 4. *Factor analysis of trade show uses.*

Show uses	Factor 1 Trans- action	Factor 2 Technical
Obtain specific terms of purchase	0.825	<0.001
Learn the exact cost of building materials	0.822	0.125
Get good deals on building products	0.821	<0.001
Evaluate suitability of exhibitors as possible suppliers	0.508	0.264
Analyze technical features and specifications of products	0.148	0.806
Get information on new and innovative wood products	<0.001	0.740
Identify new technologies available	<0.001	0.723
Gain a general understanding of in-use applications for building products	0.258	0.716
Eigenvalue	3.077	1.636
Cumulative variance explained (%)	29.8	58.9
Cronbach's alpha	0.766	0.699

reliability. This analysis indicates that these items can be simplified into *transaction* and *technical types* of information sought. The transaction-related uses include items such as obtaining terms of purchase and learning the cost of materials. Conversely, the technical-related items include identifying new technologies and analyzing their features and specifications. The variable *network with other industry personnel* was not included in the final factor solution due to low item-factor correlations.

The factor scores from this analysis were once again used in a MANOVA model. The MANOVA was conducted with the two information type scales as dependent variables and each respondent's influence level and firm size again used as independent variables (Table 5). Results suggest that there is a significant overall main effect for attendee influence ($P < 0.004$) and for firm size ($P < 0.050$), although marginally so at the $P < 0.05$ level. This again indicates an overall relationship between attendee influence, firm size, and the type of information they are seeking.

The univariate results indicate mixed significance for the relationships between infor-

TABLE 5. *Summary of types of trade show information: Multivariate and univariate ANOVA.*

Source of variation	Multi-variate F ratio	Uni-variate F ratio	De-grees of free- dom	P less than
Influence ¹	2.74		10	0.004
Transaction		0.70	5	0.623
Technical		5.05	5	0.001
Firm size ²	1.88		10	0.050
Transaction		1.55	5	0.181
Technical		2.31	5	0.049
Influence × size	3.34		12	0.001

¹ Influence was measured by asking respondents to rate their influence over building material purchases on a 7-point scale.

² Firm size was measured using the number of full time employees.

mation type, influence, and firm size. The use of the trade show to gain *technical* information is found to be related to both the attendee's influence ($P < 0.001$) and their firm size ($P < 0.049$). However, no support was found for relationships between either attendee influence or firm size and the two information types.

Marketers of wood building products should make note of these MANOVA results as they plan for future trade shows. The results suggest that this type of trade show offers exhibitors an opportunity to reach decision-makers who are seeking to learn more about new technologies and their applications for building products. While no trends were found in the use of *transaction* related information, a significant relationship was found to indicate that attendees with greater levels of purchase influence tend to seek more technically oriented information on the products displayed.

DISCUSSION

This research has illustrated the relative importance of various factors that influence wood retailers' purchase decisions. Results indicate that manufacturers should attempt to build strong relationships with retailer customers. It has been suggested (Spekman and Johnston 1986) that relationship management, in which the marketer strengthens bonds between his organization and the buying firm, is the best method for a selling organization to gain

a competitive advantage. This research indicates that trade shows can be used by marketers to engage in relationship management with retailers.

These results have illustrated the importance of a building products retailer's customers to their demand for wood building products. This suggests that wood manufacturers should utilize a "pull" marketing strategy whereby promotions are targeted at professional builders and remodelers. This type of strategy may increase demand from these professionals and take advantage of their influence on the purchase decisions of retailers.

The many wood producers that exhibit at trade shows must understand that attendees are exposed to a wide variety of information sources while at a show. This research has shown the relative importance of a number of these sources, and illustrated three categories (*in-exhibit promotions, out-of-exhibit sources, in-exhibit deals*) that can be used to represent the varied sources. In addition, exhibitors would be wise to realize that attendees have both buying and nonbuying objectives for trade show attendance. These findings taken together imply that exhibitors can use trade shows to influence multiple stages in the buyer's purchase decision-making process (Robinson et al. 1967). The early stages, recognizing a solution for a need and determining characteristics of the item needed, can be realized by attendees at a trade show. Moreover, the latter stages of selecting a supplier and actually placing an order can also be met at this type of trade show.

The tendency of attendees to seek technical information implies that exhibitors should integrate technical product data into sales presentations and *in-exhibit promotions*. A further implication is that salespersons should be well versed in the technical aspects of their products. As Bello (1992) has also noted, exhibitors with a low market share or new product offering can take advantage of an influential attendee's technical interests by illustrating that its products perform just as well as the market leader's.

From a practical standpoint, it appears that exhibit sales personnel will be more successful at adapting their sales strategy if they have some means for categorizing buyer-attendees. This categorization should ideally include the buyer's influence on purchase decisions as well as other factors such as firm size and stage in the buying process. Results from this research gave no statistical support for a relationship between job title and purchase influence, thus illustrating the downside for a salesperson who attempts to gauge an unfamiliar attendee's influence simply by asking for their title. A practical suggestion for exhibit salespersons who encounter unfamiliar attendees would therefore be to query the attendees to gain as much information as possible about their personal role and influence in the purchase decision-making for their firm. Naturally, a trade show sales force meeting with familiar buyers should already have considerable knowledge about those persons and should use that information to their advantage.

CONCLUSIONS

It is apparent that trade shows provide wood products marketers with an excellent forum not only to sell to retailers who will carry their products, but also to fulfill other marketing-related functions. For example, building relationships among wood products buyers and sellers has become increasingly important, with evidence strongly suggesting that trade shows provide an excellent opportunity to network and build relationships with others in the industry.

Increasing competition and rising costs of product promotions are forcing wood products marketers to seek greater efficiencies among the various elements of their promotion mix. Wood producers, however, cannot be expected to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their promotions without a better understanding of which portions of the mix are actually used by buyers. The current research was designed to increase this understanding for a small segment of the industry. Although the

exploratory nature of this research may have raised as many questions as it has answered, it will hopefully serve to lead future investigators in more fruitful directions to better understand relationships between a producer's marketing mix and the information sources used by buyers.

Limitations

This research is limited because of its use of a single trade show attended by a limited variety of buyers. However, the population sampled is of importance to wood products manufacturers and these results can hold value for producers seeking a greater understanding of retailer buyer behavior at such trade shows. A further limitation is that this sample of retailers was weighted somewhat more heavily toward larger firms. Results may therefore be more representative of the environment for larger firms than that of smaller retailers.

Additional limitations stem from those inherent in the use of multivariate statistical techniques such as factor analysis. For example, many procedures in factor analysis are dependent on judgments made by the researcher, and questions of reliability are valid due to the analyst starting with imperfect data (Hair et al. 1992). It must be kept in mind, however, that portions of this research were exploratory and therefore subject to the limitations inherent in such efforts. Concerns regarding external validity are worthy of consideration and yet should not stand in the way of efforts to explore and better understand buyer-seller relationships with the wood products industry. Future research aimed at validating these findings could examine buyer behavior at other wood-oriented trade shows to determine any similarities between those attendees and the ones surveyed in this research.

REFERENCES

- ARMSTRONG, S. J., AND T. S. OVERTON. 1977. Estimating nonresponse bias in mail surveys. *J. Market. Res.* 14: 396-402.
- BELLIZZI, J. A., AND D. J. LIPPS. 1984. Managerial guide-
- lines for trade show effectiveness. *Ind. Market. Mgmt.* 13:49-52.
- BELLO, D. C. 1992. Industrial buyer behavior at trade shows: Implications for selling effectiveness. *J. Bus. Res.* 254:59-80.
- , AND H. C. BARKSDALE, JR. 1986. Exporting at industrial trade shows. *Ind. Market. Mgmt.* 15:197-206.
- BONOMA, T. V. 1983. Get more out of your trade shows. *Harvard Bus. Rev.* 61:75-83.
- CESA, E. T., AND S. A. SINCLAIR. 1988. Hardwood specialty products: A billion dollar product line for home center retailers. *Forest Prod. J.* 38(6):6-12.
- COHEN, D. H., C. XIE, AND J. RUDDICK. 1992. Retailer perceptions of treated wood products in Vancouver, British Columbia. *Forest Prod. J.* 42(3):41-44.
- FORD, D. 1980. The development of buyer-seller relationships in industrial markets. *European J. Marketing* 14:339-354.
- HAAS, R. W. 1992. *Business marketing management*. Kent Publishing, Boston, MA. 899 pp.
- HAIR, J. F., JR., R. E. ANDERSON, R. L. TATHAM, AND W. C. BLACK. 1992. *Multivariate data analysis: With readings*, 3rd ed. Macmillan, New York, NY. 544 pp.
- JACKSON, D. W., JR., J. E. KEITH, AND R. K. BURDICK. 1987. The relative importance of various promotional elements in different industrial purchase situations. *J. Advertising* 16(4):25-33.
- MATER, J. 1992. *Marketing forest products*. Miller Freeman, San Francisco, CA. 290 pp.
- MEYER, C. J., S. A. SINCLAIR, AND J. H. MICHAEL. 1992. The professional residential repair and remodeling market: A review of available data. *Forest Prod. J.* 42(1): 63-68.
- MICHAEL, J. H., AND P. M. SMITH. 1994. Furniture markets as promotional tools: Integrating objectives for furniture manufacturers. *Forest Prod. J.* 44, (11/12) (Nov/Dec): 51-54.
- , AND ———. 1995. Information sources used by furniture retailers: Targeting promotions for furniture manufacturers. *Forest Prod. J.* 45(4):25-30.
- , AND ———. 1996. An analysis of home furnishings retailers' use of furniture markets. *Wood Fiber Sci.* 28(2):168-177.
- MORIARITY, R. T., AND R. E. SPEKMAN. 1984. An empirical investigation of the information sources used during the industrial buying process. *J. Market. Res.* 21:137-147.
- MULHERN, F. J., AND J. H. MICHAEL. 1995. The effect of retail promotions on homecenter shopping behavior. *Forest Prod. J.* 45(3):31-36.
- O'HARA, B. S., AND P. A. HERBIG. 1993. Trade shows: What do the exhibitors think? *J. Bus. Ind. Market.* 8(4): 18-25.
- PARASURAMAN, A. 1981. The relative importance of industrial promotion tools. *Ind. Market. Mgmt.* 10:277-281.

- PURCE, E. 1993. Remodelers bank on baby boomers to propel industry. *National Home Center News* 19(22):3.
- ROBINSON, P. J., C. W. FARIS, AND Y. WIND. 1967. *Industrial buying and creative marketing*. Allyn and Bacon, Boston, MA.
- ROSSON, P. J., AND F. H. R. SERINGHAUS. 1991. *International trade fairs and exporter performance: An empirical study*. Dalhousie University Discussion Papers in International Business, No. 101, September.
- SHETH, J. N., AND A. SHARMA. 1997. Supplier relationships: Emerging issues and challenges. *Ind. Market. Mgmt.* 26:91-100.
- SINCLAIR, S. A. 1990. Paper manufacturers' relationship with paper wholesalers: A partnership? *Forest Prod. J.* 40(9):24-28.
- . 1992. *Forest products marketing*. McGraw-Hill, New York, NY. 403 pp.
- SPEKMAN, R. E., AND W. J. JOHNSTON. 1986. Relationship management: Managing the selling and the buying interface. *J. Bus. Res.* 14(Dec):519-531.
- TRADE SHOW BUREAU. 1994. *A guide to the U.S. exposition industry*, vol. 2. Denver, CO.
- VLOSKEY, R. P., AND P. M. SMITH. 1993. Enhancing business relationships via electronic information technologies: Wood products (sellers) and homecenter (buyers). *Forest Prod. J.* 43(5):25-33.
- , AND E. J. WILSON. 1997. Partnering and traditional relationships in business marketing: An introduction to the special issue. *J. Bus. Res.* 39(1):1-4.
- WEST, C. D., AND S. A. SINCLAIR. 1992. A measure of innovativeness for a sample of firms in the wood household furniture industry. *Forest Science* 38(3):509-524.
- WEBSTER, F. E., JR., AND Y. WIND. 1972. A general model for understanding organizational buying behavior. *J. Marketing* 36(April):12-19.